

Route 33 Planning Initiative



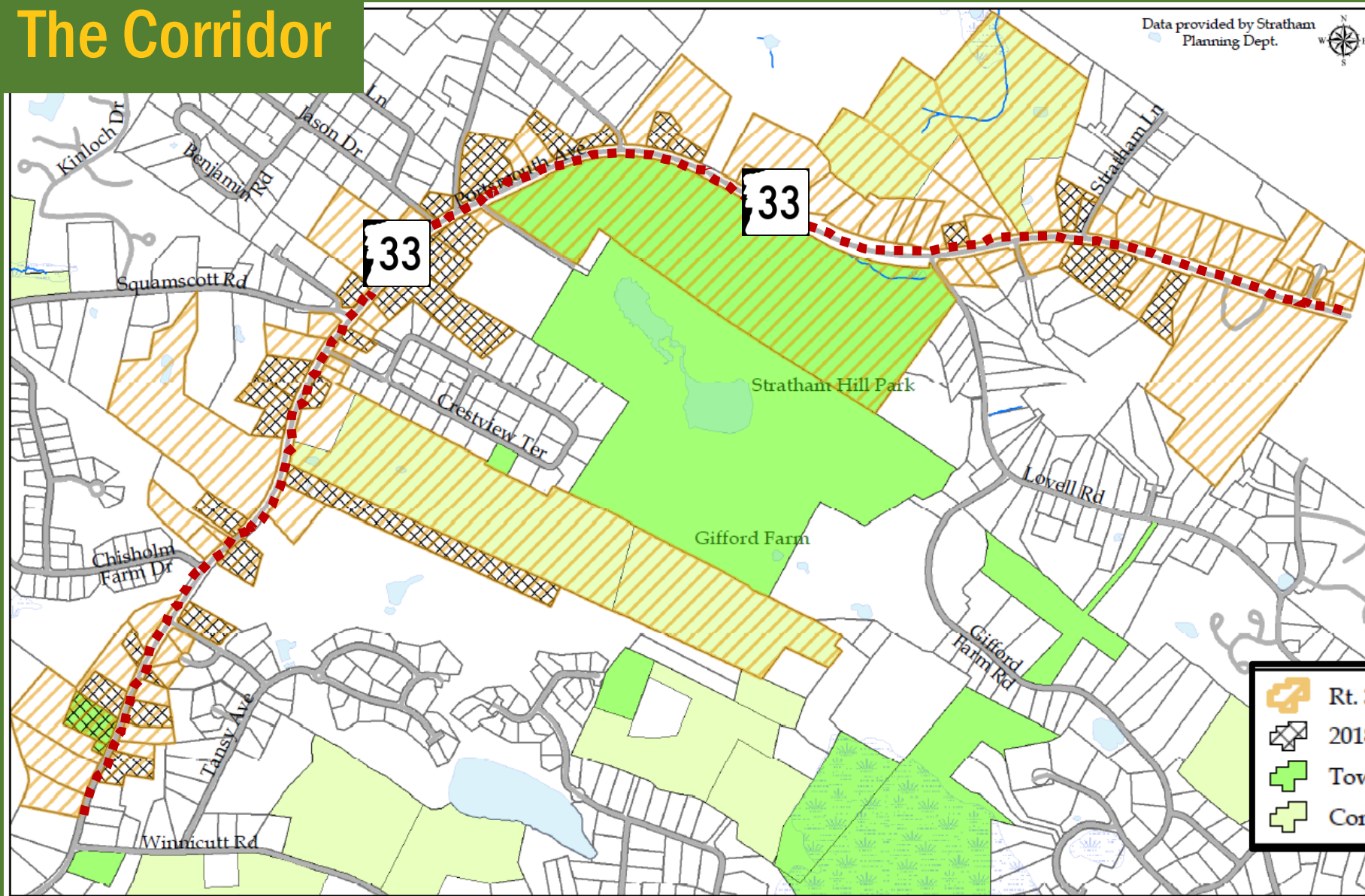
Community Input Session
May 13, 2021





Welcome!



Route 33 emerged as a focus of the 2019 Master Plan
Planning Board focused on this initiative to advance recommendations

The Corridor



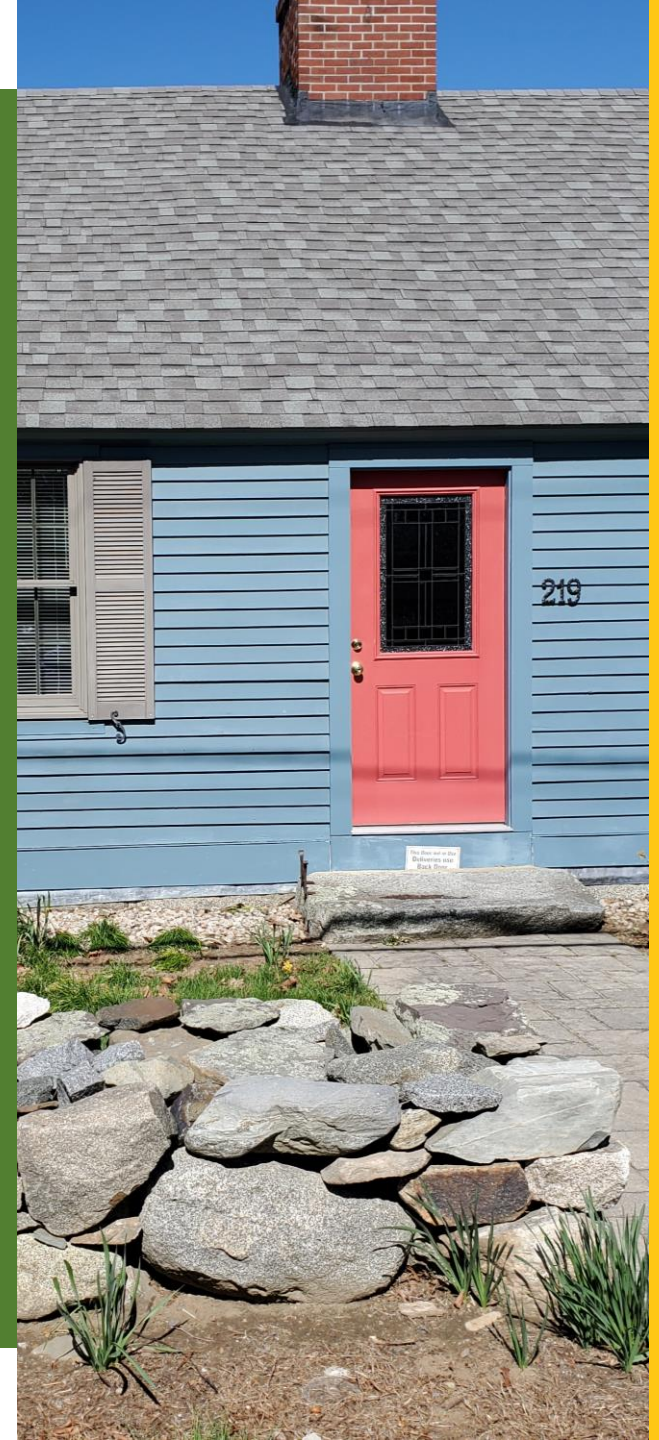
-  Rt. 33 Corridor Properties
-  2018 Potentially Hist. Significant
-  Town Owned Parcels
-  Conservation Restrictions

Format for Today's discussion

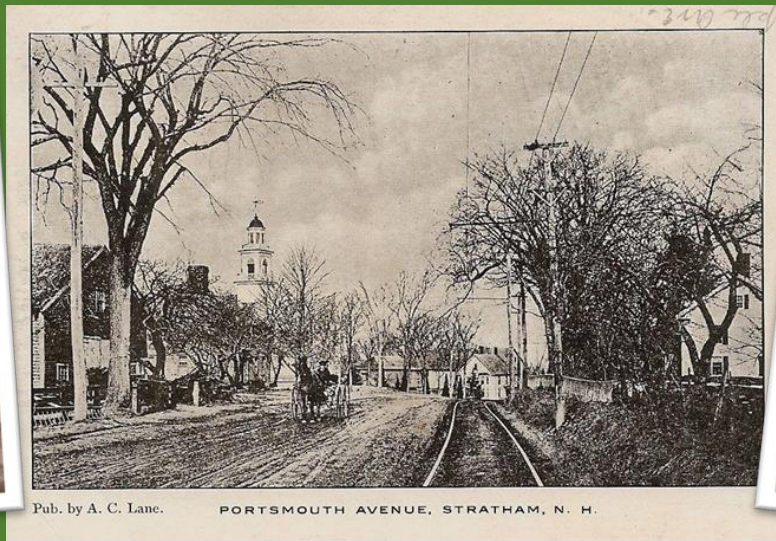
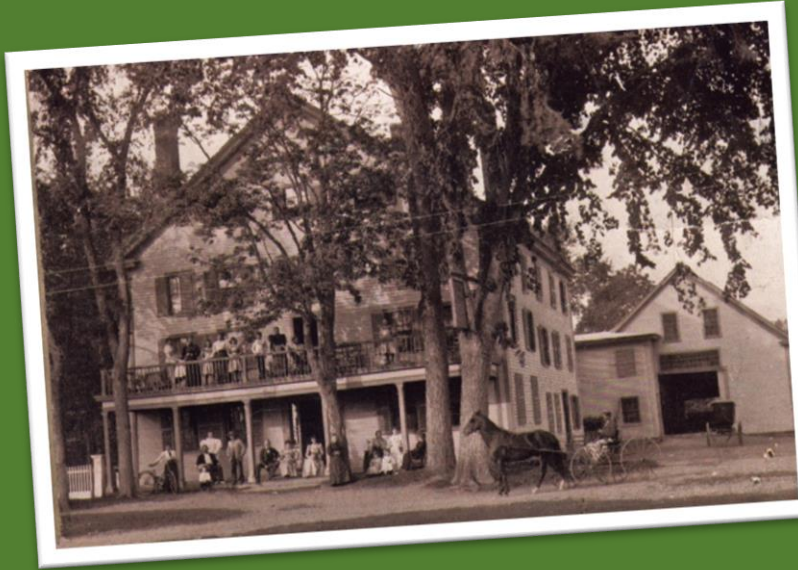
- Route 33 Yesterday
- Route 33 Today
- Route 33 Legacy Highway Ad-Hoc Committee
- 2021-22 Route 33 Planning Initiative
- Is a Neighborhood Heritage District the right fit for Route 33 in Stratham?
- What do you think?

Your comments and questions

The main purpose of today's event is to hear directly from residents and property owners before the initiative advances.



History – The King's Great Highway



- Late 17th century route between Portsmouth and Exeter
- Served as NH Route 101 until new highway completed circa 2000
- Always served as Stratham's primary business and civic corridor
- Greatest concentration of historic structures in Stratham

2019 Stratham Master Plan

- Identified Portsmouth Avenue's historical resources as well as its opportunities, threats, and challenges
- Highlighted Portsmouth Ave. from Town Center to Greenland TL as 'Route 33 Legacy Highway'
- Joint effort of Heritage Commission and Planning Board to advance recommendations



MASTER PLAN Town of Stratham

Adopted
November 20, 2019

Route 33 Legacy Highway **Ad-Hoc Committee**

PURPOSE & INTENT:

- “Reevaluate the current zoning language especially with regard to Route 33”
- *Stratham 2019 Master Plan*
- “Evaluate existing land use ordinances to ensure they encourage effective and vibrant reuse of historic properties, decreasing the risk of losing them to deterioration”
- *Stratham 2019 Master Plan*
- “Address the unique resources and challenges along Portsmouth Avenue”
- *Ad-Hoc Committee Final Report, 2020*
- “Foster greater private investment in the nearly three dozen properties that have been identified as contributing to the historic character of this heavily traveled area.”
- *Ad-Hoc Committee Final Report, 2020*



Route 33 Legacy Highway **Ad-Hoc Committee**

CHALLENGES:

- Traffic Volumes and noise levels
- Dispersed arrangement of historically significant structures
- Decline in residential uses
- Increase in dilapidation of older structures & apparent neglect
- Abutter concerns related to adaptive reuse projects
- Physical & visual impacts of increased parking
- Lack of transportation options – automobile-oriented
- Small lot sizes, no public water & sewer access



Route 33 Legacy Highway Ad-Hoc Committee

GOALS (condensed):

- Amplify historic character
- Prevent commercial sprawl
- Preserve residential/agricultural character and scenic viewsheds
- Enhance historic properties with complementary new development
- Prohibit new development that detracts from historic character
- Promote adaptive reuse of historic structures – deter demolitions
- Allow professional offices, expanded home occupations, and limited retail/commercial uses
- Support Tax Incentives (RSA 79-E) to spur economic development



Route 33 Legacy Highway **Ad-Hoc Committee**

STEPS ALREADY TAKEN:

- Permanent land conservation (Barkers Farm & Saltbox Farm)
- Utilization of RSA 79-D for historic barn easements
- Expansion of RSA 79-E eligibility beyond Town Center
- Community involvement in 2019 Master Plan
- Ad-Hoc Committee research and final report (2020)

NEXT STEPS:

- Citizen input for potential rezoning effort
- Planning Board & Town Staff prepare zoning language for 2022 Town Election



Objectives of the Route 33 Planning Initiative

- Preserve historic structures and features
- Promote adaptive re-use of historic structures, minimize demolitions
- Maintain flexibility & creativity for property owners
- Support a collaborative regulatory approach
- Promote private investment
- Encourage good design
- Reduce zoning variance requests



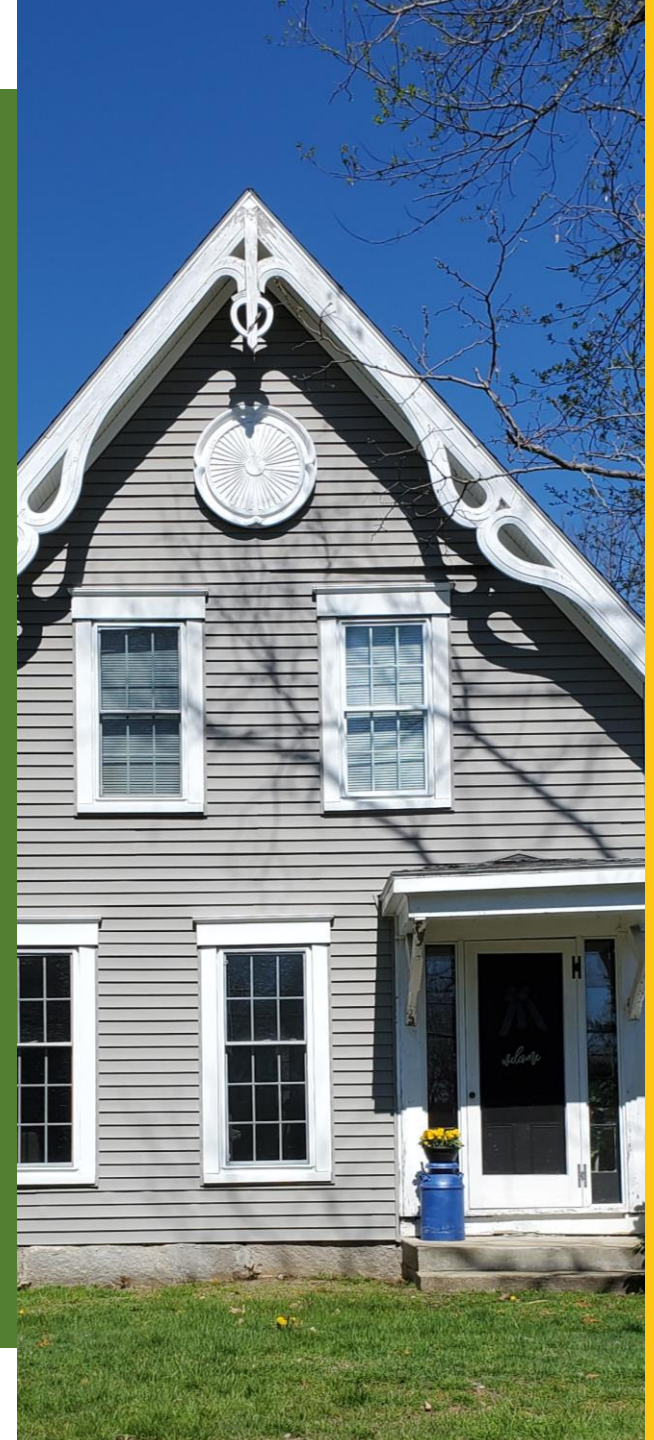
One Option– **A Neighborhood Heritage District**

- Focuses on the ‘big picture’ of the character of the corridor and not so much on individual details, like window and trim details
- A tool to control demolitions, including of residential buildings
- Includes Advisory Committee process
- Includes review of residential projects
- Provides for a collaborative review process



Benefits of a **Neighborhood Heritage District**

- A tool to prevent demolitions, preserve character
- Provides Route 33 property owners seats in the review process
- More collaborative, design-focused review process
- Provides more clarity regarding development of neighboring properties
- Encourages flexibility and creativity in design



A Neighborhood Heritage District is *NOT* a Historic District

Neighborhood Heritage District v. Historic District

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advisory Committee• Focus on 'big picture' of area• Many improvements exempt• More flexibility• Collaborative Approach | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Regulatory Commission• Detail-oriented• Most projects require approval• More rigidity• Regulatory-focus |
|--|---|

How the **process** would work for applicants



- Optional pre-application review for applicants to gain preliminary input
- Application to Town Planning Department
- Meeting with Advisory Committee within approximately 2 weeks
- Planning Board issues decision
- Improved clarity & flexibility for business uses compared to current process

Kenniston Tavern Example



Types of residential projects typically exempt from review/approval

- Window and door replacements
- House painting or siding replacement
- Most landscaping changes or improvements
- Construction of small sheds, greenhouses
- HVAC improvements
- Any kind of interior improvements
- Small additions that are not visible from the right-of-way

Types of residential projects typically requiring review & approval

- Any structural demolitions
- Building additions or new accessory buildings
- Removal of large trees or stonewalls
- Changes in siding or roofing materials
- Home occupations

All new non-residential or non-agricultural uses would also require review and approval through this process.

An opportunity for small businesses & community gathering places



- Opportunities for more home-based businesses
- Opportunities for limited small businesses & offices where appropriate

What do **YOU** think?

- How do you see Route 33 in 25 years?
- How do you see your property in 25 years?
- Are we on the right track?
- How can we best encourage historic preservation?
- How can we foster more private investment?
- Is a Neighborhood Heritage District the right fit for Route 33?

Next Steps

- Incorporate your input into writing new ordinance (Summer 2021)
- September: Draft Ordinance released for public review
- October: Public event held to present Draft Ordinance and gather additional input
- December: Ordinance finalized for public hearing
- January 2022: Planning Board holds public hearings for zoning amendments
- March 2022: Voters decide on re-zoning at Town Election

Thank you!

- Stay informed by visiting www.strathamnh.gov/route33
- Contact planning@strathamnh.gov with any additional questions or comments